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ABSTRACT

Three themes run through the accounts of parents and teachers as they relate their experiences rearing and teaching children with fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS): (1) Children with FAS can achieve far more than current negative stereotypes suggest; (2) Early intervention and excellent family care make an enormous difference to the success and happiness of children with FAS; and (3) Specific educational strategies can help alcohol-affected children learn in the classroom and the home. Through their accounts, these parents and teachers provide the "wisdom of practice," that is, lessons and inventions based in experience that can help other parents and educators devise educational strategies adapted to the unique needs of individual alcohol-affected children. Part I discusses how prenatal alcohol exposure affects children and their families, and explains the difficulties in information processing related to many behavioral problems of children with FAS. In Part II, parents present stories about parental advocacy, the importance of early diagnosis and early intervention, and the successes of alcohol-affected children. Part III covers teaching methods, classroom techniques, strategies for mainstreaming children with FAS in a small rural school, and alternative schooling for alcohol-affected children. Part IV presents recommendations for counselors and therapists working with families of alcohol-affected children. Appendices contain an extensive outline of educational strategies for preschool, elementary, and adolescent students with FAS or alcohol effects, and a list of 74 resources (audiotapes, videotapes, books, journal articles, newsletters, and organizations). An index is included. (SV)